



STATE OF CONNECTICUT

DEPARTMENT OF AGRICULTURE

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PRESS RELEASE

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CT Grown Seafood for Sensational Summer Meals

Hartford, CT/July 31, 2006— What could be easier – or more delicious – on a sweltering summer day than ultra-fresh seafood grilled to perfection?

Seafood is ideal for grilling when hot weather makes cooking an unwelcome task. Its delicate flavor requires little in the way of added ingredients, making preparation a snap, and it cooks quickly, minimizing the time required next to the grill.

Seafood is at its best when it is freshest, and it doesn't get any fresher than Connecticut Grown. Much to the surprise of some inland residents, Connecticut boasts a thriving seafood industry, specializing in shellfish. The state is, in fact, the Northeast's leading hard clam and total aquaculture producer, with 80,000 acres of shellfish cultivation in Long Island Sound.

According to David Carey, Director of Aquaculture at the Connecticut Department of Agriculture, so much shellfish is produced in the state that the 40-plus independent harvesters/dealers in Connecticut ship most of their product to wholesalers in Boston, Rhode Island, and New York. Although the dealers in those areas repackage the shellfish with their own labels, Mr. Carey says that it is highly likely that clams bearing those labels originated right here in Connecticut.

So why buy seafood that has been shipped hundreds of miles and has spent days – or longer – in transit and storage when you can buy the very same product fresh from the boat? Consumers can purchase a wide variety of items from the retail store at the Stonington Town Dock. Those who live in other parts of the state will be happy to know that fresh Connecticut Grown seafood also is available at a number of farmers’ markets, including those in Milford, Stratford, Fairfield, New Haven, and Storrs.

Seafood not only tastes great and is a snap to prepare, it is also a great source of protein and other nutrients, including Omega 3s, those heart- and brain-healthy fatty acids. To ensure the health and safety of every piece of seafood commercially harvested in Connecticut, the state Bureau of Aquaculture vigilantly monitors and tests the water within Long Island Sound. According to Mr. Carey, over 6,000 samples from the 500 sample stations located throughout the Sound were processed in 2005. In addition, all harvesters have specialized training in safety and sanitation.

“Fish at its freshest is the healthiest, most delicious meal you can put on your table,” declares Barbara Gordon, Executive Director of the Connecticut Seafood Council, “and Connecticut fish and shellfish are indeed the freshest you can purchase!”

For more information about Connecticut Aquaculture, visit the Connecticut Department of Agriculture’s website at www.ct.gov/doag/ and click on “Aquaculture” at the left side of the page.

For a complete listing of farmers’ markets in the state, go to www.ct.gov/doag/ and click on “Publications” at the top of the page.

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